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Lucia A Keegan 02/08/2007 12:58:14 AM From DB/Inbox: Lucia A Keegan

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UNCLAS PARIS 00483

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INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES
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SUBJECT: France raises AI vigilance level

11. On February 5th, following the announcement by UK's DEFRA of the first reported case of AI in a commercial turkey farm in Great Britain, the French Ministry of Agriculture raised its AI risk assessment and vigilance from level 2 (negligible risk) to level 3 (low risk). Impacts of this change include the prohibition on the transportation and use of live decoy ducks for hunting. Release of courier pigeons, which may fly over countries with declared AI cases, is also prohibited. The French government is asking that all sightings of dead birds be reported to either the local fire station or to local veterinary authorities. A post-mortem examination will be performed on any bird whose death looks suspicious.

12. Impacts do not include the confinement of commercial birds yet but the French government continues to watch the AI situation in European countries very closely. Additional precautions may be forthcoming.

13. As of February 6, imports of UK poultry meat are not prohibited. In 2006, France imported approximately 30,000 MT of poultry meat (mostly frozen and fresh chicken parts) valued at \$62 million.

14. It is too early to evaluate the impact on the French poultry consumer due to the UK case, which was widely reported by the media, especially TV. The discovery of AI in a commercial poultry operation in France in 2006 led to an immediate drop in French poultry consumption in excess of 30 percent. Consumption has now, more or less, returned to its pre-AI level.

Stapleton